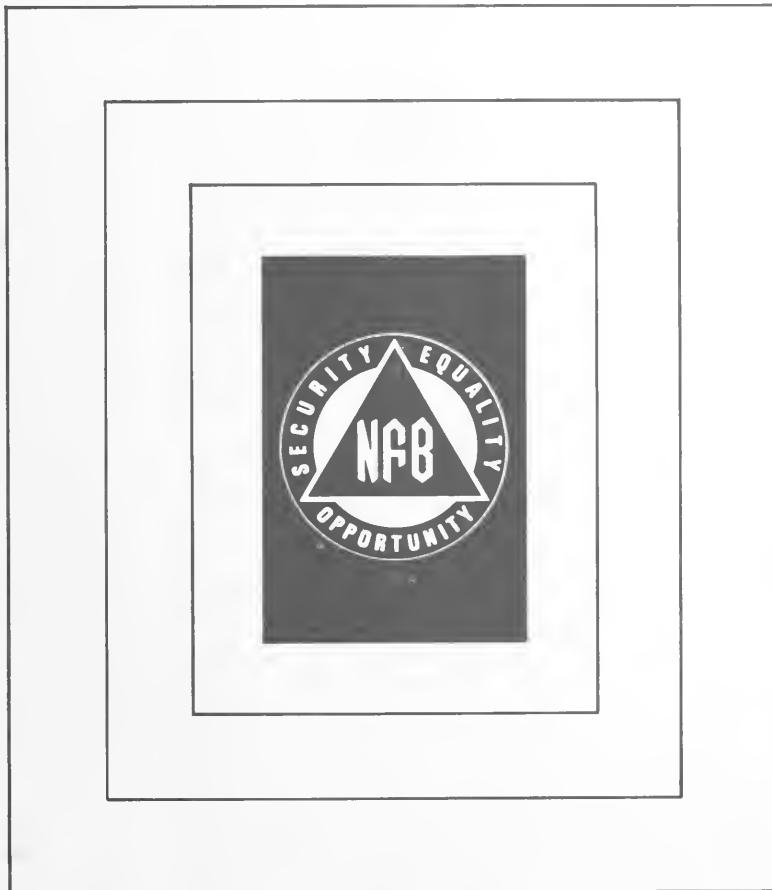


Braille Monitor



MARCH, 1975

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

A Publication of the
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND
KENNETH JERNIGAN, President

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SPEAKING FOR THE BLIND—IT IS THE BLIND SPEAKING FOR THEMSELVES.

THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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* * *

If you or a friend wishes to remember the National Federation of the Blind in your will, you can do so by employing the following language:

"I give, devise, and bequeath unto NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND, a District of Columbia nonprofit corporation, the sum of \$____(or, "____ percent of my net estate", or "the following stocks and bonds: ____") to be used for its worthy purposes on behalf of blind persons."

If your wishes are more complex, you may have your attorney communicate with the Berkeley Office for other suggested forms.

THE BRAILLE MONITOR
MARCH 1975

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A RYE MORSEL OF KORN FROM NAC

The following item appears in the Winter 1974 issue of *the standard-bearer*, NAC's official publication:

IOWA ACB CALLS ON COMMISSION TO SEEK ACCREDITATION

The Iowa Council of the Blind, ACB, by resolution at its convention this past summer called on the Iowa Commission for the Blind to secure accreditation to insure that Iowa blind citizens receive service on an equal basis with those provided by accredited agencies throughout the rest of the nation.

The Iowa affiliate of the American Council of the Blind is barely alive as an organization—holding secret meetings, having an armed guard at the door, and usually mustering something over thirty blind per-

sons at a “state convention.” The National Federation of the Blind of Iowa, truly representing the blind of the state, has a thousand members and has several hundred at its state conventions. All meetings are open.

To the Iowa Council of the Blind resolution calling on the Iowa Commission for the Blind to seek NAC accreditation so that “Iowa blind citizens receive service on an equal basis with those provided by accredited agencies throughout the rest of the nation,” there is an obvious answer. The blind of Iowa can appreciate a joke as well as the next person, but God deliver them from receiving the kind of services “provided by accredited agencies throughout the rest of the nation”—or, at least, most such accredited agencies. Like no thanks, man. □

RFB ON HIGH HORSE

Editor's Note.—Christy Glaze Crespin is president of the NFB Student Division and a student at the State University.

RECORDING FOR THE BLIND, INC.,
New York, New York, January 3, 1975.

Miss CHRISTY GLAZE,
San Gabriel, California.

DEAR MISS GLAZE: It has been brought to my attention that your recent order included your comment that “Also, I find it in the best interest of myself and other students like myself that you please disaccredit yourself from the NAC.”

I am enclosing a copy of our letter of

February 27, 1974, to Marc Mauer which is self-explanatory. I have also been in touch with Kenneth Jernigan about our position and I have actively supported NFB's proposals to the NAC at NAC membership meetings.

We should like very much to see the differences between the NFB and the NAC resolved because it is those differences and the continuing wrangling and controversy that are not in your best interest or in the best interest of other students and blind people—not our accreditation status. I will continue to work toward the successful resolution of those differences. I think you must agree that our NAC status really does not hurt you in any way and that actually

we are always striving for better standards of service for our students—a practice we adhered to for many years before we became accredited.

Again let me repeat, what is hurting blind people is this continuing controversy between the NFB and the NAC.

Sincerely,

DONALD STALEY,
Executive Director.

The conflict is not just between NAC and the NFB but between NAC and the blind. Further, by lending its name to NAC (in view of NAC's behavior) Recording for the Blind is hurting blind people.

Actually, I think you know this in your heart, but that you don't want to know it because of what it would imply and what it would indicate you should do. Pontius Pilate has never come off very well in history, not even as well as the tyrants.

Very truly yours,

KENNETH JERNIGAN,
President, National Federation of the Blind.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND,
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,
Des Moines, Iowa, January 23, 1975.

Mr. DONALD STALEY,
Executive Director,
Recording for the Blind, Inc.,
New York, New York.

DEAR DON: Christy Glaze has been kind enough to share with me your letter to her of January 3, 1975. I believe your letter was condescending and patronizing. I further think that it does not tell it like it is.

You say that it is the wrangling and controversy and differences between NFB and NAC that hurts the blind, not your accreditation. By such analogy and reasoning, one could argue that it was the controversy and wrangling and the differences between Hitler and the Allies that hurt the world, not any actions of the Nazis. One could go on to argue that if a given country wished to maintain trade and other relations with the Reich, it was simply fostering peace in the world.

RECORDING FOR THE BLIND, INC.,
New York, New York, January 20, 1975.

Dr. KENNETH JERNIGAN,
President, National Federation of the Blind,
Des Moines, Iowa.

DEAR KEN: Are you by any chance going to be in New York in the near future?

I would like very much to discuss our plans to establish a Job Referral Service for blind students graduating from college and graduate schools and get your ideas and suggestions. I think you will be enthusiastic about this newest RFB project, and I hope very much to get the cooperation of NFB as it develops. Also, if possible, I would like to present it to your membership at your next convention.

Sincerely,

DONALD STALEY,
Executive Director.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND,
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,
Des Moines, Iowa, February 4, 1975.

Mr. DONALD STALEY,
Executive Director,
Recording for the Blind, Inc.,
New York, New York.

DEAR DON: My letter of January 23, 1975, doubtless crossed in the mail yours of January 20. If you received it before writing, perhaps you would have channeled your effort in some other direction since the answer of the Federation would surely have been obvious.

However, since this did not occur, I shall now make response to your letter of January 20. Apparently my letter of November 15, 1974, and my earlier conversation with you were not understood. In the opinion of the blind of this Nation NAC is not simply one of many issues. It is not peripheral. We cannot put it aside and "agree to disagree" on it while working with NAC supporters on other matters. As we see it, NAC has done such terrible injury to the blind (and, for that matter, continues to do it) that we must give top priority to it.

The National Federation of the Blind already has a job referral service, one which is quite successful; but if we did not, we would be most reluctant to lend support to a NAC-accredited agency by promoting

any of its activities, including a job referral service. As I have told you before, we wish you well personally. We also have nothing but good wishes and good feelings toward Recording for the Blind. However, you are driving us step by step into an adversary position. By your continuing support of NAC, you and others like you are polarizing the field of work with the blind and nullifying the good effects of anything else you might do in the field, regardless of how constructive it may be.

In other words, Don, I cannot invite you to attend the NFB Convention this year, either as speaker or exhibitor. Ordinarily (because of the good work of Recording for the Blind as an organization and you as an individual) we would consider it an honor to have you speak and to have an exhibit from you. Under the circumstances this is not possible.

Don, please understand that we are serious about NAC. We are not playing a game, and we are not going to grow tired of the struggle. We absolutely intend to reform NAC or see it replaced by something more constructive and more responsive to the wishes and needs of the blind. I hope I have made clear our position.

Very truly yours,

KENNETH JERNIGAN,
President, National Federation of the Blind.

NAC: STILL STANDARD

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION COUNCIL
FOR AGENCIES SERVING THE BLIND
AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED,
New York, New York, December 30, 1974.

Dr. KENNETH JERNIGAN,
President, National Federation of the Blind,
Des Moines, Iowa.

DEAR DR. JERNIGAN: NAC plans to review and revise additional standards in 1975 in a manner similar to that used when physical facilities and vocational services were reviewed beginning about a year ago. We are cordially inviting the National Federation of the Blind to participate in these reviews.

We regret that you were unable to accept our invitation to participate in the earlier reviews, but hope that you will reconsider this year.

If your organization wishes to assist us in this effort please advise us and we will send you further details and guidelines, and sets of the standards to be reviewed this year (standards for accounting and reporting, and standards for workshop services).

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

GERALDINE T. SCHOLL,
Chairman, Commission on Standards.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND,
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,
Des Moines, Iowa, January 23, 1975.

GERALDINE T. SCHOLL,
*National Accreditation Council
for Agencies Serving the Blind
and Visually Handicapped,
New York, New York.*

DEAR DR. SCHOLL: In your letter of December 30, 1974, you say that "NAC plans to review and revise additional standards in 1975 in a manner similar to that used when physical facilities and vocational services were reviewed beginning about a year ago." If NAC plans to behave as it did last year, then our participation will follow similar patterns.

Very truly yours,

KENNETH JERNIGAN,
President, National Federation of the Blind.

□

BLEECKER STILL BLEAKER

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION COUNCIL
FOR AGENCIES SERVING THE BLIND
AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED,
New York, New York, December 30, 1974.

Dr. KENNETH JERNIGAN,
*President, National Federation of the Blind,
Des Moines, Iowa.*

DEAR DR. JERNIGAN: Thank you for the copy of your letter of December 20 to Dr. Adams and the copy of the August 16, 1966, letter to Arthur Brandon. A re-check of our files has failed to turn up the August 16 letter but I accept your statement that you sent it.

The only letter you had written relating to service on the NAC Board of Directors of which I had knowledge is your letter of June 10, 1966 (copy enclosed). As mentioned in my recent letter reviewing your early service as a NAC director as reflected in the minutes of the first four board meetings, it seemed reasonable to assume that you had embarked upon your duties as a director with the intent to uphold the responsibilities inherent in that position.

In fact, I do not see that your letter of August 16 changes this. It is obvious that you felt and expressed strong reservations regarding NAC and its impact upon blind

people. This is the point you were trying to make at our DHEW meeting, and I very much regret that I didn't know about both of your 1966 letters at the time. However, since you stated in your August 16 letter, "I will do what I can to try to make the Council work," your willingness to work with NAC undoubtedly was accepted in the spirit in which Mr. Brandon understood it to be offered. Your actions at the early board meetings which you attended as reflected by the minutes certainly sustain this impression.

The point I was trying to make at our meeting with Dr. Adams is that dedicated people who seek to achieve their objectives effectively should be able to put aside hostile intransigence and develop sound and productive working relationships. As we enter a new year, it is my earnest hope that the "war against NAC" will be replaced with good will and that we may thereby achieve meaningful cooperation.

Very truly yours,

RICHARD W. BLEECKER,
Acting Executive Director.

STATE OF IOWA,
COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND,
Des Moines, Iowa, June 10, 1966.

Mr. ARTHUR L. BRANDON,
*Chairman, Commission on Standards
and Accreditation of Services
for the Blind,
New York, New York.*

DEAR MR. BRANDON: This will reply to and thank you for your letter of May 27 inviting me to serve on the Board of Di-

rectors of the National Accreditation Council. I accept the invitation and shall be happy to serve. At this time I should like to ask two questions: On what date does the one year term begin? Can you tell me the names of the people who will make up the first Board of Directors?

I have marked the dates of November 17 and 18 on my calendar and shall plan to be present at the meeting which will presumably be called at that time.

Very truly yours,

KENNETH JERNIGAN,
Director,
Iowa Commission for the Blind.

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION COUNCIL
FOR AGENCIES SERVING THE BLIND
AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED,
New York, New York, January 15, 1975.

Dr. ANDREW S. ADAMS,
*Commissioner, Rehabilitation
Services Administration,
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR DR. ADAMS: The plan of the National Accreditation Council to further increase consumer participation includes, as you know, filling up to seven vacant seats on the board of directors with consumers. This will be on the agenda of the February 27 meeting of the board, which has been moved up from the usual April or May date in order to add more consumers in as expeditious a manner as possible. You are cordially invited to attend; information about the exact time and place is enclosed.

Meanwhile, however, I should like to take this opportunity to report to you and

to ask for your personal assistance as we move toward further action.

You will recall that at our November 15 meeting in Chicago you complimented NAC on opening the door to greater consumer involvement, and you encouraged us to consider additional steps we might take to obtain cooperation from the National Federation of the Blind.

Here is what we have done so far.

Shortly after our meeting, our nominations committee chairman, Dr. John W. Ferree, wrote to the President of NFB and asked that NFB suggest names for the committee's consideration. Dr. Ferree also wrote at the same time to the American Council of the Blind and the Blinded Veterans Association and asked for their suggestions of candidates.

ACB and BVA have indicated they will be pleased to furnish our committee with names of candidates. Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, however, in his letter of December 6, 1974 (copy attached) stated that NFB would decline our invitation.

Dr. Adams, NAC, as you have recognized, is seeking to take major steps to involve members of NFB in NAC in a meaningful way. We very much regret that NFB has decided not to suggest candidates for our board of directors at this time and we hope NFB will reconsider its position.

At our November 15 meeting, you urged NFB to reexamine its "minimum non-negotiable" proposals to see whether it might also take steps to bring us closer together.

Because of your recognized interest in consumer participation and your leadership in seeking to ameliorate the NAC-NFB mat-

ter, I ask you now to call upon NFB to cooperate with NAC's present effort to elect members of national consumer organizations of the blind to its board of directors. If NFB will supply names as our nominations committee has requested, important progress can be made toward accomplishing our common objectives.

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,

RICHARD W. BLEECKER.

cc Kenneth Jernigan

No mention of our phone call. I hope that NFB will recognize NAC's right to exist, and try to help us rather than try to destroy us. Dick Bleecker.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND,
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,
Des Moines, Iowa, January 21, 1975.

Dr. ANDREW S. ADAMS,
*Commissioner, Rehabilitation
Services Administration,
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR DR. ADAMS: It is probably not necessary to comment upon the letter of January 15, 1975, from Dr. Bleecker to you; but I would simply like to state again for the record that NAC has not done what it says it has done and is not now doing what it says it is doing - at least, not in a meaningful way and not in a constructive spirit. In fact, the entire NAC posture, along with Dr. Bleecker's letter, can only be considered an insult to the blind of the Nation. When NAC is ready to make meaningful reform, we will meet them more than half way and will extend them every cooperation.

Cordially,

KENNETH JERNIGAN,
President, National Federation of the Blind.

□

A "WORLD OF DARKNESS"

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
East Lansing, Michigan
October 21, 1974

Mr. JAMES D. WALKER
905-2 Boyd Drive
Albion, Michigan 49224

DEAR JIM: I have just concluded reading the Jernigan address, enclosed in your recent letter which takes me to task for using the phrase "world of darkness" in reference to the blind.

It was obvious that Mr. Jernigan is a very powerful proponent for the blind being recognized by society as human beings; not inferior and not helpless. It was also obvious that Mr. Jernigan's staff conducted an immense research project into the literature on which he bases his thesis.

I believe I am unjustly accused, however, by being placed in the same melting pot as those authors who have treated blindness as "total tragedy, abnormality, and dehumanization." Furthermore, I cannot agree that my reference to a "world of darkness" implies, in any way, that the blind have "given up and turned out the lights as an individual," as you state. We have a problem of semantics; you are sensitized to the Jernigan theory that literature is against you and has told it like it isn't. That may be perfectly true, and he has amassed a large body of evidence to support his theory; but my

choice of the phrase "world of darkness" was an innocent attempt to remind the sighted that there is a difference between the world of the sighted and the world of the blind - no matter how Jernigan wishes to define it.

I rebel at the implication that my use of such words stigmatizes, disgraces, shames, or denigrates the blind in any manner whatsoever. Nor can I accept the fact that I am misleading and misinforming the public or leading them to believe that blindness is "not just the loss of sight, but a total transformation of the person," to quote Jernigan.

Based on his harangue against the American Foundation for the Blind, HEW, and "many of the so-called 'experts' who today hold forth in the field of work with the blind," our Radio Talking Book service falls into his category of "unenlightened, medieval, computerized mythology . . . not only a restatement of the tired old fables of primitive astrology and dread of the night." If Jernigan had stuck to his main thesis that literature is against the blind, I would have been sympathetic with his entire address. But when he employs that tired old argument that "our tax dollars" are being wastefully expended in decking the blind out in "donkey's ears," he is including our service in his sweeping generalization, and it gives lie to the fact that the Radio Talking Book is on the air only because the

blind themselves requested it and the blind assist in the program decision-making process.

So, I must be honest with you - the Jernigan speech did *not* stimulate positive thought and interest in areas other than literature, because it is so misleading and detrimental to services such as ours which, as you state, "a blind person requires." What concerns me even more, however, is the possibility that Jernigan has led you to believe that our service for the blind was planned and is programmed by so-called sighted "experts." You state, "Should you need information regarding blindness: best sought from a blind person . . ." would seem to support this. I am particularly sensitive to such a misconception after having devoted countless hours with the blind over the past four years. I appreciate your suggestion that Mr. Wilcox can offer assistance as to real needs of the blind via the radio, but I find it difficult to believe that Mr. Wilcox has a storehouse of information which has been overlooked by our blind advisors from the mid-Michigan area as well as such agencies as the State Library for the Blind, the Bureau of Blind Services, the Michigan School for the Blind, and others.

Lest I leave you with a totally negative letter, permit me to thank you for the subscription to the *Braille Monitor*; we are familiar with it and have used selections from it in the past. It will be helpful, however, to have our own copy available.

Thank you for your interest and concern. I hope you will come to consider the Radio Talking Book service for the blind and physically handicapped a "notable exception" to the bad press referred to in

Mr. Jernigan's address.

Sincerely,

RICHARD ESTELL
General Manager

JAMES D. WALKER
Albion, Michigan
December 16, 1974

Mr. RICHARD ESTELL
Radio Talking Book
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan 49224

DEAR DICK: One way to eat an elephant (overcome a large obstacle) is to eat it up one bit at a time. To some people, such as yourself, "a world of darkness" is "innocent" or even trivial. Yet, it is not as innocent as you might suggest. It has to be ingested, digested, and eventually passed off as waste matter. So I, as an individual who happens to be blind, shall take my bite - even if it leaves a bad taste in my mouth. Even though you have made an assault upon the integrity of Dr. Jernigan, I speak as an individual. I am forwarding a copy of your October 21, 1974 letter to Dr. Jernigan so that if he chooses to respond, it shall be his decision. I will take responsibility for this "bite" of correspondence.

Before I deal with certain points of your letter, I wish to emphasize that my original letter regarding "a world of darkness" was to contest that concept but not the whole of the services of the Radio Talking Book. Your expanded attack on Dr. Jernigan's address is a result of your defense, not my offense.

I am not so naive or narrow to place all into a melting pot. However the blind have-like blacks and women - ended up in a general stew because of an overgeneralized concept. How can you place all of the blind in a "world of darkness?" You have done this by your public service announcement. By innuendo, addressing yourself to two different worlds - the sighted and the blind-you have suggested tragedy, abnormality, and dehumanization. Your facts lack stature. Even though there may be some difference, I would argue that the blind have alternatives. If there is any difference, it is a physical characteristic of visual perception. To suggest that two different worlds exist because of a characteristic is more than simple semantics. Hitler was a proponent of two worlds: "the master race" and the others.

Furthermore, since you are not blind how do you know that a separate world of darkness exists? You have been well socialized. I have often said, "blindness is blackness." Unlike a world of darkness, I refer to second-class citizenship. I speak to the plight of Black People, or Women, or Jews, or Native Americans. Would you also be chauvinist enough to separate these humans into other worlds? For they, like the blind, are victims of characteristics. How would you color their worlds? John Lennon wrote and recorded a song: "Woman is the Nigger of the World" - I contend that as long as people are told that we, the blind, live in a world of darkness, we are treated as "niggers." We the blind, like blacks, like females, do not wish to live in different worlds. However, you state "but my choice of the phrase 'a world of darkness' was an innocent attempt at reminding the sighted there is a difference between the world of the sighted and the world of the blind . . . no matter how Jernigan wishes to define it," is an attitude which is anti-blindness. Please try: "a world of alternatives."

When you say that you "rebel at the implication that my words 'stigmatize, disgrace, shame, and denigrate the blind in any manner whatsoever,'" I contend that these are not your words, nor do you personally take the responsibility of implication. I wish that in saving face, you could admit a wrong choice of words-age-old words.

I believe I have pointed out that our three words of controversy are misleading. I have scars from the battle long before I encountered them over Station WKAR. When people assume I am weak of body or mind because of blindness, my rebellion will upstage yours any day. When a State agency such as your revered Division of Services for the Blind suggested piano tuning, vending stands, or simple factory assembly, I assumed myself college material and proved it. And ask a legitimate and reliable sample of students who have graduated from the school for the blind how they were treated by the society from which they were isolated. They would emulate the feelings of patronage which I receive daily.

We live in a world of charity - a world of welfare. The "world of darkness" has permeated the minds of employers, the minds of bureaucrats, the minds of social workers, and the minds of radio personnel.

I have not been led by Dr. Jernigan to believe that your programming services are that of so-called "sighted professionals." I never inferred such in my previous letter. However, for many reasons, including those stated above, I know that many "so-called professionals" do make the decisions on

policies regarding the blind. The blind are a minority in work for the blind. Dr. Jernigan *has* led me and 50,000 other organized blind persons to believe that this shall not be the case for very long.

Mr. Wilcox, past president of the National Federation of the Blind of Michigan (as of November 2, 1974) is not a superhuman as you presumed by the use of the adjective "storehouse." I recommended him because he is blind and he has a good working knowledge - a firsthand account - of the issues which affect the blind. He is unlike the agencies and institutions who are removed from the day-to-day situations of the blind.

I hope that the use of the *Braille Monitor* is exercised prudently. There is much which can inform and educate the blind of the Radio Talking Book listener: legislatively on Social Security and blind teachers' rights, accreditation and agency service, philosophy of the political blind, and even recipes. (The latter is least of the blind person's concerns.)

If some of this letter appeared cutting and hostile, it is not because I hate or despise Richard Estell; it is because I hate and despise being put into a "world of darkness." In fact, I intend to continue a good rapport with you and I especially hope that the criticism decreases. I am patient and will be diligent in campaigning for the virtues of blindness.

Sincerely,

JAMES D. WALKER

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
Des Moines, Iowa, January 20, 1975

Mr. RICHARD ESTELL, *General Manager*
Radio Station WKAR-FM
Radio Talking Book
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan

DEAR MR. ESTELL: Being a man of peace and never having heard of you until I received your rather pungent letter to Mr. Walker, I hardly know whether to make comment or read it all again and be further astonished. It seems to me that one need not hunt mosquitoes with cannon. On the other hand, mosquitoes (especially the right kind - or should I say the *wrong* kind?) can spread disease and contagion. As in the days of yellow fever, the carrier of the plague may go unnoticed, merely being regarded as a niggling nuisance.

All of which brings me to whether it is bad to say that the blind "live in a world of darkness." You apparently think it isn't. I think it is. Even though I disagree with many topics with most of the so-called "experts" in the field of work with the blind, the majority of them are on my side in the "blindness as darkness" question.

Early in the last century, when yellow fever raged at its height, people boiled their drinking water and fired guns to cause motion in the air. The disease did not abate. Some raged at the Creator; others despaired. The disease did not abate. Later experiment showed that the mosquito carried the plague. Anger at the mosquito did not solve the problem. Rather, it was destruction of the breeding grounds, protection from the bites, and public education. Whether the plague be fever, or fuzzy thinking, the same remedies still apply.

As I have already said, I had never heard your name before receiving your broadside. I wish you well, and I wish your program well; but I also wish that you would reconsider making references to blindness as a "world of darkness." I wish you would do this irrespective of whether I am enlightened or ignorant, beautiful or benighted. The matter must stand or fall on its own merits.

Not only is your metaphor damaging in its symbolism but it is also false as a physical fact. When a sighted person closes his eyes, he does, indeed, perceive darkness. However, such is not the case with the blind. The back of your hand does not per-

ceive darkness, any more than it perceives light. There is an absence of all such perception. One must "see" darkness, just as he must "see" light. Therefore, the blind person does not "live in a world of darkness." This is simply not the truth.

Having said all of which, I send you under separate cover some more of my writings. I hope you will choose to read them, but if you do not, be it so.

Very truly yours,

KENNETH JERNIGAN, President
National Federation of the Blind

□

A RYE BIT OF OATS

Editor's Note:—Any conclusion regarding the juxtaposition of the following article emanates from the reader and not from the editors.

JURY CITES OFFICIAL'S 'NEGLECT'

By BILL WASSON

A Richmond grand jury recommended that Don W. Russell, Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, be officially reprimanded "for neglect and mismanagement in the performance of his duties."

The grand jury also indicted four former employees of the department and the president of a truck driver training school on grand jury larceny charges involving the alleged theft of state funds administered by the department.

The indictments and a nine page report highly critical of Russell and the depart-

ment were handed down by a special, seven-member Richmond Circuit Court, Manchester Division grand jury investigating an alleged kickback scheme.

Named in thirteen felony indictments returned today were James V. Turner III; Bruce E. Bourgeoise, Jr., president of Revco Tractor Trailer Training, Inc.; Leslie Horwitz; Clifton David Cosby, Jr.; and William Rogers Creekmur.

With the exception of Bourgeoise, those indicted today are former employees of the department. Turner, Cosby and Creekmur were department counselors and Horwitz was a supervisor, according to a State Police investigator assigned to the probe.

Turner is charged with three counts of grand larceny involving the alleged theft of a total of \$575 over a forty-eight month period.

Bourgeoise is charged with two counts of

grand larceny in the alleged theft of a total of \$1,870.04 over a forty-eight month period. Horwitz is charged with two counts of grand larceny in the alleged theft of \$9,973.72 over the same period.

Cosby is charged with one count of grand larceny in the alleged theft of \$2,372.72 in the four-year period.

Creekmur is named in five indictments charging him with four counts of grand larceny and in the alleged theft of \$1,381.56 and with one count of forgery involving a \$200 check. The check allegedly was forged July 6, 1971.

Judge Frank A. S. Wright ordered capias to issue for the five persons indicted and set bond at one thousand dollars each for everyone indicted except Creekmur, whose bond was set at \$2,500.

Judge Wright ordered that once the five persons are taken into custody and, if they are bonded, they appear in Richmond Circuit Court, Manchester Division, on January 18.

According to the jury's report, the department had been operated on a "numbers basis rather than on a quality basis. By this it is meant that the goal is to process and rehabilitate a maximum number of clients so the record looks good."

The grand jury said the department is "not organized nor operated on clear lines of command and responsibility. At some levels it is difficult to determine the next higher authority.

"Personnel at the higher levels of DVR and particularly the commissioner's office," the report said, "have been remiss in their

performance of their duties. Some mismanagement may have been due to ignorance of responsibilities, however, it is not believed this should be any more mitigating than ignorance is acceptable for violation of any other law."

The department, the report said, "shows considerable mismanagement in their practices as a business entity."

The grand jury requested to remain in session and also requested that copies of its report be sent to Governor Mills E. Godwin Jr.; Attorney General Andrew P. Miller; Russell of the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation; and the chairman of the State Board of Vocational Rehabilitation.

According to its report, the grand jury, which has been in session since October 1, said it requested State Police to investigate the department's other regional areas.

The report said "the results (of the police investigation) were negative and it is assumed that authorized practices such as are listed in this report are confined to the Richmond metropolitan area."

The grand jury said department funds had been deposited in personal bank accounts, signatures forged on checks made to clients, records of disbursements of funds falsified and funds used for purposes which were not legal or authorized.

The grand jury also said in some instances fictitious names were used and funds were paid on behalf of nonexistent clients.

DON RUSSELL RESIGNS

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
Department of Vocational Rehabilitation
Richmond, Virginia, February 5, 1975

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Administrators of Vocational
Rehabilitation
FROM: Don W. Russell
SUBJECT: Retirement Plans

I have today submitted my resignation as Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Rehabilitation, effective April 16, 1975.

I have made no specific plans for the future except to rest and relax a period of time and put my boat into top condition for the boating season which is just around the corner. I hope to become a little bit involved in some phase of work relating to rehabilitation and, personally, continue to support the continuation and expansion of the finest service delivery program in the Nation.

The most satisfying part of all my 33 years in rehabilitation has been in working with the other members of CASVR (Council of Administrators of State Vocational Rehabilitation). □

WHY SHOULD THE BLIND RECEIVE DISABILITY INSURANCE?

BY
KENNETH JERNIGAN

In the 94th Congress the blind are making an all-out push to secure the passage of the Disability Insurance Bill. In 1964, 1965, 1967, 1971, and 1973, the blind secured passage of this bill through the Senate but lost its principle provisions in the Senate-House conference. This time we can and must secure its enactment. It will mean the difference of thousands of dollars to many thousands of blind people. It is morally right.

This may be the most important single piece of legislation affecting the blind ever introduced in this country. It certainly ranks alongside Title X of the Social Security Act giving public assistance to the blind in the 1930's, the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Stand Act in the 1930's, and the Barden-LaFollette Act including the blind in rehabilitation in 1943. The provisions of the bill are simple and far-reaching. If it passes, any blind person who has six

quarters of employment during which he has paid into Social Security will be eligible to draw disability insurance payments as long as he remains blind. This would be regardless of his income or earnings.

Why should this be so? Is it really fair for a blind person with a high income to draw a monthly insurance payment? Are we being inconsistent by talking, on the one hand, about equal opportunity for the blind and their ability to compete and, on the other hand, asking for what amounts to preferential treatment?

It all depends on whether you look on this proposal as a true insurance or as a welfare payment to relieve the distress of poverty. The idea that society should give payments or subsidies to particular individuals or groups on the basis of something other than poverty or economic need is not at all new or revolutionary.

If, for instance, a rich man has three children and a poor man has none, the poor man is still taxed to help pay the costs of sending the rich man's children to the public schools. This is so because society has determined that such a system is in the best interest of the state and the Nation. It is not that the rich man cannot afford to make special payments for the costs of educating his children or that the poor man (who may have no children at all) can easily spare the cash. Society is thought to be better off if the children of all (rich and poor alike) have the opportunity to attend public schools and if all who have taxable assets (regardless of whether they have children) pay to support the schools. In fact, if only poor children could go to the public schools, our society would be segregated into classes, and there would be considerable stigma attached to attending the public schools. Accordingly, a subsidy is given to the people who have children (rich and poor alike) because a social need is thus met. We have become so accustomed to the subsidy that we do not think about it at all, and one rarely hears any serious suggestion that only the poor should be able to attend the public schools, with the rich barred from the subsidy.

Likewise, farmers (the wealthy and the poor alike) are paid support prices and subsidies. Rightly or wrongly the Congress has determined that a social need is met by the provision of the subsidy. In the same manner tariffs are charged on certain items coming into the country, taxing the consumer to support a given business or industry. It is thought to be in the best interest of the country to "protect" that particular business or industry by means of a subsidy, regardless of what it may be called.

Also, steamship lines, railroads, and air-

lines have been given various subsidies in the form of mail contracts and other benefits. And speaking of mail, certain types of mail (particularly first class) make a profit while others are heavily subsidized by the government—on the theory that society receives benefits by having particular types of material as widely distributed as possible (magazines, newspapers, et cetera).

Thus, it would appear that the principle is long-standing and firmly established that society shall pay a subsidy if a social benefit results. This brings us back to the question of disability insurance for the blind. Why should it be granted? In other words, what social benefit results?

Before dealing with this question let us talk for a moment about the nature of insurance. If a man goes to a private insurance company, he may buy insurance against blindness. If he then becomes blind, he will receive the insurance payments. He is receiving the insurance for which he paid, and his income has nothing to do with the matter.

The doubter may say, "This argument would only hold true for people who become blind. What about the person who has been blind all of his life? Can a man buy insurance against what he already has?" No, a single individual can not. But, a group can. In many organizations (including the one in which I work) this very thing can and does occur. The State of Iowa has purchased hospital insurance to cover its employees. Further, it pays a large part of the premium for each employee. If a new person joins our staff and subsequently is hospitalized because of a pre-existing condition, he still draws full insurance payments as part of the group. The group has purchased insurance to cover its members

(from a private company, incidentally).

These are the principles of insurance, and insurance is not welfare. It is for the rich and poor alike. The main requisite of insurance is that it meet a need for the individual or the group purchasing it.

Having said all of this, we come squarely to the issue. We the blind are asking society to purchase an insurance policy against blindness. Of course, the blind are part of society, and the blind who are working will (just as others) pay taxes to purchase the insurance.

"So," one asks, "what is the social need to be met, and how will society benefit?" To answer the question let us look at the situation now and compare it with the situation which will exist if our bill passes.

At present if an individual becomes blind and ceases to be gainfully and substantially employed, he likely will be eligible to draw disability insurance. He has every incentive to remain unemployed and not to return to work at all. Why? In the first place he is probably not an expert in the law. He only knows that he is now drawing an insurance payment each month and that if he tries to go back to work, he may lose it — whether his attempt at self-support is successful or not. The law is complex, and the talk of allowed earnings, trial work periods, definitions of gainful and substantial employment, *et cetera*, is confusing and not conducive to an attempt to make new beginnings. Furthermore, if the individual actually goes to work and (after a specified trial work period) is making in the neighborhood of one hundred fifty dollars per month, he will lose his disability insurance payments. This is true even though he may have been drawing considerably more than

one hundred fifty dollars per month in disability payments. If dependents are taken into account he may have been drawing disability insurance payments in excess of four hundred dollars per month tax free. He is penalized for having tried to become self-supporting by losing his insurance altogether. Even if he goes to work, he is tempted to conceal earnings and, if he yields to the temptation, lives in fear of being detected.

Let us suppose that before blindness the individual had an income of \$15,000 per year. If (after blindness) he finds employment at \$6,000 per year, he is still not eligible to continue to draw his disability insurance, even though the loss of income has occurred.

Besides all of this, it is conceivable under the present law that the individual may become blind, go back to work, then lose his job, and thereby become ineligible ever to receive disability insurance payments again because (by going back to work) he has demonstrated that his blindness does not prevent him from engaging in gainful and substantial activity. If, on the other hand, he is willing to settle down and draw his disability insurance without any attempt to go back to work at all, he can securely rest in the knowledge that the payments will continue month after month, year after year.

If an individual is born blind, he may be eligible for disability insurance if his father had a given Social Security status. Otherwise, he can not qualify. There are many other ramifications and qualifications but the point is clear. Under the present law the incentives are for an individual to remain idle, to sit at home and not jeopardize his monthly check.

Now, let us consider what the situation will be if our disability insurance bill passes. There is no complexity and no confusion. The blind person has every incentive to venture and earn to his full capacity. He knows that he will have a monthly insurance payment coming and that it will not be jeopardized by attempts at improving his condition. The blind person is better off and society is better off for him to be productive instead of idle, working instead of sitting at home. In addition, this does not even take into account all of the current anxiety and grief which occur because of the present complexities, mix-ups, and disqualifications on technicalities.

Moreover, there is one more matter which should be mentioned. The real problem of blindness is not the loss of eyesight. It is the misunderstandings and the misconceptions which exist. With proper training and opportunity the average blind person can do the average job in the average place of business and do it as well as his sighted neighbor. The massive discriminations which exist against the blind in employment and in opportunity come from society as a whole, not merely from the blind members of society. Therefore, it is reasonable that society should insure its members against these disadvantages.

But there are those who have objected to this proposal, arguing that it constitutes a radical deviation from the original purpose of the Social Security disability insurance program. The usual contention is that the program was originally established for the purpose of partially replacing earnings lost due to the onset of disability. The answer to this contention has already been spelled out, but it should once again be made explicit. Under current law (which is designed partially to compensate a dis-

abled blind individual for loss of earnings) the only actual feeling of long-range economic security belongs to those who do not attempt employment. Clearly, this is not as it should be and the legislation here proposed calls for a reversal of this negative incentive structure. If adopted, the new law would reward the efforts of blind Americans to achieve independence and self-sufficiency through employment. No longer would they have to risk the possible economic disadvantages now present in their efforts to enter the labor force. Surely, if the Social Security disability insurance program for the blind is to be directed at meeting the needs of those who are now blind, of those who will become blind, and of the American society as a whole, it must be designed to encourage (rather than discourage) blind beneficiaries to achieve their maximum potential vocationally.

Quite naturally, one of the concerns of some of those considering the adoption of this disability insurance proposal is the cost factor. In a letter dated September 21, 1973, to the Honorable Casper W. Weinberger, Secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, the following statement appears:

"It is estimated that the long-range cost of the bill would be 0.13 per cent of taxable payroll. (This would increase the cost of the disability insurance program by about 10%.) Assuming that fiscal year 1975 would be the first full year in which the provisions of the bill would be operable, about \$400 million dollars in additional benefit payments would be made in that year."

This statement, taken on its face, would appear to raise serious questions as to the advisability of the proposed legislation. On

the contrary, however, the data here presented need not lead to a negative conclusion on the subject. As previously indicated, the over-riding objective in this legislation is to provide a positive incentive for the full employment and productivity of blind Americans. This kind of forward step could certainly not have a negative price tag attached, since by virtue of their employment, blind workers would become tax payers, thus generating a great deal of additional revenue. Moreover, while the data includes the estimated increase in benefit outlays by the Social Security disability insurance program as a direct result of the predictable increase in employment of blind Americans, even if such estimates may be difficult to make, any realistic picture of the costs involved in this proposal must account for a sizable increase in revenues to both the general income tax pool and the Social Security disability insurance program as well.

Additionally, the data presented does not acknowledge the fact that some (perhaps a considerable number) of blind persons now receiving payments through the Supplemental Security Income program would become eligible for the improved disability insurance plan and thus would become ineligible to continue as SSI recipients. In other words, the liberalization of the disability insurance program as it affects blind people would result in a transfer of a certain number of blind SSI recipients from the welfare roles to the Social Security insurance plan. Certainly, any realistic cost picture must take account of this certain decrease in the number of SSI recipients.

What these arguments suggest is a well known fact which must be born in mind when considering this proposed improvement in the disability insurance program

for the blind. Under our present schemes of Social Security and Supplemental Security Income, we have adopted a philosophy and developed a system which is designed to provide at least a subsistence level income for all blind and other disabled persons. The present structure is so organized that the vast majority of blind persons fall into one of three categories: (a) those who are employed and paying taxes; (b) those who are unemployed and beneficiaries of Social Security disability insurance; and (c) those who are unemployed and recipients of Supplemental Security Income payments. In other words, the present system is structured in such a way that either a blind person works and helps to pay his own way, or does not work and others pay it for him. The legislation here proposed recognizes this fact and provides for maximum utilization of the talents, abilities, and potentials of blind Americans to earn their daily bread.

But some may argue, "What you say is true, but if we adopt this improved disability insurance for the blind only, then others of the disabled will seek inclusion as well and such a step is beyond our means." This argument raises the question, "Why should this proposal be limited to the blind?"

The answer to this question is definitely not mysterious. Over the years, in Congress after Congress, the unique problems of the blind have been recognized in much sound legislation providing for special solutions. Never have the members of the Congress been unwilling to adopt meaningful programs for blind persons simply because someone else may someday want to be included. In its wisdom the Congress has always recognized that blind citizens in this country face a unique and difficult kind of economic and social discrimination. The

members of Congress have continuously demonstrated their awareness of the fact that the real problems of blindness stem not so much from any physical lack of ability, but more from a general lack of opportunity and the means of achieving a first class status. The original adoption of and subsequent amendments to the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Stand Act, giving the blind a priority status in the establishment and operation of vending facilities in Federal installations, amply illustrates the attitude of the Congress toward adopting special solutions to meet the unique difficulties of the blind.

For many years, the blind of this country have recognized that the arguments set forth here are both morally and practically sound. In six previous Congresses, the members of the United States Senate have voiced their agreement. Similarly, a sizable number of the members of the House of Representatives rallied to the support of this positive step forward for blind citizens. Now, for the seventh time, this proposal comes before the Congress for its serious considera-

tion and hoped for adoption. Those who are knowledgeable in the field believe that the time is now at hand for a new era of opportunity in the lives of the blind of this Nation. The passage of the Disability Insurance Bill will play an important part in bringing that new era into being.

Editor's Note: As this issue goes to press, we learn that Congressman James A. Burke of Massachusetts has again introduced our Disability Insurance for the Blind bill. Its number is H.R. 281. Our members should immediately contact their own Congressmen and ask them to introduce identical bills. So far ten identical bills have been introduced in the House. Congressman Burke will also serve as chairman of the Subcommittee on Social Security of the Ways and Means Committee. Senator Vance Hartke has said he will introduce the disability insurance bill and work for it and, at the time of this writing, is in the process of doing so. Every Federationist should get behind our people in Washington and work now to pass this legislation in this session of Congress.

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FACT SHEET: IMPROVED DISABILITY INSURANCE FOR THE BLIND

A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act so as to liberalize the conditions governing eligibility of blind persons to receive disability insurance benefits thereunder.

HISTORY. The Disability Insurance for the Blind bill, which has passed the Senate six times, was first offered in the 88th Congress by Senator Hubert Humphrey. Senator Vance Hartke introduced the bill in the 90th Congress whereby the House-Senate Conference on Social Security matters made

the generally accepted definition of blindness (20/200, etcetera) the standard for visual loss under the Disability Insurance Program. Offered again in the 91st Congress, the Committee on Ways and Means adopted a portion of the proposed Disability Insurance for the Blind bill removing recency of quarters earned in social security-covered work requirement making 30,000 otherwise ineligible blind persons eligible for disability benefits. In the 93rd Congress the Senate passed the Disability Insurance for the Blind bill as a floor amendment to H.R.

3153.

PROVISIONS. 1) Allows qualification for disability benefits to the person who is blind according to the generally accepted definition of blindness (20/200, etcetera) and who has worked six quarters in social security-covered work; 2) continues payment of benefits irrespective of earnings so long as blindness lasts, rather than cutting off benefits if the blind person earns as little as \$200 in a month, as provided in existing regulations.

WHAT WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED. Enactment of the above provisions will establish eligibility for disability insurance benefits to blind persons who have worked a year and a half in employment covered by social security. This eligibility will continue regardless of the earned income of the blind person.

Through such an arrangement, all of the negative incentives which now discourage a blind person from seeking employment will be removed. No secure income will be lost to those who attempt to make themselves productive. Those who make the predictable response of seeking and finding employment will pay into social security rather than only drawing benefits as is now the case. Those who find employment will also become tax payers rather than tax burdens. Payments to blind persons from Supplemental Security Income and other public assistance programs will be reduced as the earnings of the blind increase.

WHY? The provisions of the Disability Insurance for the Blind proposal recognize the severe financial disadvantages which

confront those who are blind. Although most blind persons possess the capacity to be productive in the labor force, their efforts to earn their daily bread are frustrated by a system which rewards idleness with financial security - the certainty of the monthly check. Under existing law, each blind person receiving disability insurance benefits must choose between alternatives which are often unpleasant. First, he may elect to continue receiving regular benefit checks, realizing that even a small amount of income earned through work may jeopardize entitlement to the monthly checks. Second, he may elect to seek employment in the hope that this will be financially advantageous, but realizing that an important measure of security is being cast aside by demonstrating employability to the Social Security Administration. Those who choose the second of the alternatives must be prepared to assume the financial burdens which go with living in a sight-structured society - that is, they must be prepared to spend a certain amount of their income in hiring sight for job related activities such as reading or driving. Also they must be prepared to face a world which has not yet accepted the concept that the blind are able to compete equally with the sighted in terms of their capacity to work. Because of typical employer attitudes toward the blind, the jobs which they get are often short-term, insecure, and low paying. The person who is sighted, with an income of \$15,000, will, if he becomes blind, often be employed at less than half that wage. Seventy percent of the employable blind population is either unemployed or underemployed. This legislation will go a long way toward correcting this inequity.



FRAUD REVEALED IN PLACING OF BLIND PERSONS

BY
W. F. MINOR

Printed with permission from (Jackson, Miss.) The Times-Picayune

An investigation by the State Welfare Board has revealed that not more than ten or twelve legally blind persons are being placed in jobs in the business world each year by the Blind Vocational Rehabilitation program.

E. U. Parker, of Laurel, a member of the Welfare Board, confirmed the findings to *The Times-Picayune*. Figures of blind rehabilitation published in the past by the blind vocational division "have been loaded and do not show the correct picture," Parker declared.

The blind rehabilitation program had available \$3.6 million in State and Federal funds during the present fiscal year and has been recommended for \$4.3 million in the proposed State budget for next fiscal year.

"For the amount of funds which are being spent on the blind rehabilitation program, I am shocked at how few persons are actually being placed in public and private competitive employment," Parker said.

Parker confirmed to *The Times-Picayune* the investigation by the Welfare Board revealed that about one-half of the twenty-two names of persons furnished by the director of the blind rehabilitation division as having been placed in outside jobs in the past year had admitted having vision above the standards for being legally blind.

"The information on legally blind per-

sons actually placed in competitive jobs is buried within the reports that the division has been putting out" Parker said. "We do not believe that what is being done is integrating the legally blind into society in Mississippi."

The investigation is said to show that seven blind persons holding college degrees recently were doing menial jobs in the Mississippi Industries for the Blind as part of the sheltered workshop program.

"If the rehabilitation program was really effective, there is no reason why a college graduate should not be placed in employment in the private sector," Parker said.

Mississippi has approximately 8,200 blind persons and annually the number increases by 500 to 600.

The number of legally blind persons reported rehabilitated by the blind division has declined in the past four years from 215 to 153. Including the visually handicapped, the number of persons rehabilitated has dropped from 565 four years ago to 483 the past year.

Parker said the investigation was conducted "for the benefit of the Welfare Board and much of the information should not be public, but I hope a lot of it is made public."

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BRAILLE: A BIRTHDAY LOOK AT ITS PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

BY
JIM BURNS

For all practical purposes, the year 1975 marks the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the birth of the Braille system of embossed writing. Its life, though relatively short, has been a stormy one. Just as most inventions do not come in a single flash of intuition, Braille had a rather painful gestation period. This was followed by an unfortunately neglected childhood. Then came an adolescence fraught with strife before contending factions finally allowed Braille to ripen into the mature, universally accepted system used today.

In the early 1800's when Louis Braille became a student at the Royal Institution for Young Blind in Paris, there were in existence over twenty different systems of embossed type.¹ At this school the studious young Braille could choose from among a collection of only fourteen books printed in a system of large italic Roman letters in relief. This had been invented by Valentin Hauy, the founder of the school and not surprisingly was the accepted mode of reading there. However, as was the case with most of the other existing methods of printing for the blind, Hauy's was a slow, cumbersome way to read. Each character had to be tediously scanned to be recognized and then each had to be slowly built onto those coming before and after to form words. In addition, it did not provide a means of writing for the blind.

In 1821 Charles Barbier, an artillery captain in the French army, visited the school. Two years earlier he had invented a system of writing by dots based on phonetic prin-

ciples. Called "night writing," it had originally been meant for use by soldiers on the field of battle at night. Barbier had then improved it, renamed it Sonography, and taken it to Dr. Guillie, head of Braille's school. Guillie had expressed concern as to the complexity of the invention (words were not spelled out, but were written phonetically; the great many dots often required for a single word made deciphering a lengthy process). Thus it was not until the undaunted Barbier's second visit to the school that the system was introduced to the students.

Louis Braille eagerly learned Sonography but soon became aware of several flaws in it. No attention was paid to conventional spelling because of the phonetic emphasis; there was no provision for punctuation, accents, numbers, mathematical symbols, or music notation; and the complexity of the combinations made reading difficult. At first Braille sought mildly to modify the system, but after a meeting with an obstreperous Barbier, the fifteen - year - old schoolboy decided to concentrate on devising a completely new method of dot writing.

Braille worked intensively on his invention. By 1825 he had, among other things, cut Barbier's twelve-dot cell in half, and his system was more or less complete.² In 1827 parts of the *Grammar of Grammars* were transcribed in Braille, and in 1828 Braille applied his brainchild to music notation. Finally in 1829 he published his *Method of Writing Words, Music, and Plain Songs by Means of Dots, for Use by the*

Blind and Arranged for Them. He followed this in 1834 and 1837 with yet improved versions of his method.

The Braille system was eagerly seized upon by blind students in Paris. However, it had to combat resistance from the old guard of sighted teachers who criticized the use of an alphabet whose configurations were so different from those of print. After all, the sighted teachers could not easily read it. Braille was also criticized on the ground that the use of such a different mode of reading "set blind people apart" from others. The fact that near illiteracy due to the failings of the preferred systems of embossing tended to set blind people apart from others was overlooked. Thus Braille was for years largely ignored by teachers of the blind, and it was not until 1854 — three years after Braille's death — that his own alma mater officially accepted his system. Likewise, it was not officially recognized anywhere in the United States until the Missouri School for the Blind adopted it in 1860, and Braille was not extensively used in Great Britain until after 1868.

In the United States Braille had not only to weather competition from embossed letter systems such as Moon Type and Boston Line Type, but it also underwent a long period of internecine warfare. A few used the French arrangement. Others used Joel W. Smith's American Braille, a modified form of the original system in which the most frequently occurring letters were given the fewest dots. Yet others preferred New York Point, a more radical change by William Bell Wait making the cell horizontal instead of vertical, two dots high and from one to four dots wide depending on the width of the letter represented. All of these had their advantages and disadvantages. The economy

of dots in American Braille made writing by hand easier. New York Point saved more space and made reading speedier, but had such a cumbersome method of forming capitals, apostrophes, and hyphens that these punctuation marks were rarely used. The French version was bulkier but offered uniformity with Great Britain and most of Europe. Therefore, while New York Point was officially recognized by the American Association of Instructors of the Blind in 1871, all three forms were used.

This conflict — The War of the Dots — resulted in the need to produce such widely used books as the Bible and popular textbooks in three forms. It also made it difficult for blind persons brought up on different systems to communicate. This situation lasted until 1918 when a revised version of the original French system was adopted. However, the agreed-upon form —Revised Grade 1 and 1/2 Braille — still differed from the more heavily contracted Grade 2 system used in the United Kingdom. More committees were formed, more meetings were held, more speeches were made, until a speaker at one of the ensuing national conventions was moved to suggest: "If anyone invents a new system of printing for the blind, shoot him on the spot."³ At last in 1932, with no new systems devised and no known fatalities, an agreement between the United Kingdom and the United States established Standard English Braille, Grade 2 (a compromise heavily favoring the British version) as the contracted form for everyday use in English-speaking countries.

In the meantime Frank Hall had invented the Braillewriter to speed up the hand copying of Braille (1892) and, in the same decade, he had invented the Stereograph used to emboss the zinc plates for the pro-

duction of press Braille. By 1932 further improvements had been made in both of Hall's inventions. Braille was finally free to mature and develop to its true potential.

Now, one hundred and fifty years after Louis Braille devised the system that was used by only a few Parisian students, it is used by approximately 45,000 Americans alone and perhaps twice that number are able to read it but do not do so regularly.⁴ Several printing houses in the United States and abroad produce Braille on Braille presses. At least 8,000 certified volunteer transcribers in the United States are at work invaluabley supplementing the relatively few titles that can be produced annually on the Braille presses.⁵ In addition, work continues at the Royal National Institute for the Blind in Great Britain and elsewhere on solid-dot Braille, a method of printing Braille in which heat-sealed plastic dots are deposited on the surface of thin paper, resulting in uncrushable dots that are reduced in bulk by forty-five percent. Continuing exploration is also being made into computer-produced Braille and other new means of mass production. Teachers of Braille continue to experiment with new teaching methods, and many hope that further perfections will be made in the code itself.

What then of the future of Braille? There are some who say that the number of Braille readers is declining and will continue to do so because of continuing advances enabling the blind to read ordinary print (the Optacon, Stereotoner, CCTV systems, and so on) and because of steady improvements in recorded media. One must pause though when confronted with the astronomical costs often involved in purchasing a CCTV system, the Optacon, or a Stereotoner (some of these devices start in the hundreds of dollars and range up to as much or more

than \$3,000), when one considers the hardware involved in using all of these electronic devices; and when one considers a potential reading rate that is usually considerably less than that of a good Braille reader. Likewise, Braille is superior in many ways to recorded media. Certain subject areas such as mathematics, some of the sciences, and foreign languages in which more than pronunciation is stressed, practically dictate the use of Braille. Only with difficulty can a person skim or skip from place to place while using recorded media, and a person's reading rate is limited by the speed of oral speech.

It is desirable and right that the use of Braille continue for another reason that is less tangible than the foregoing, but of equal or even greater importance. If a blind person does not read or write Braille he will remain that much less independent. If he cannot read Braille he will remain dependent on sighted readers or recordings. If he can neither read nor write Braille he cannot label cans, boxes, cartons, and the like in his kitchen, bathroom, or shop. He cannot take down simple notes, addresses, or telephone numbers. Stated simply, Braille increases independence—a value that far transcends its worth just as a reading/writing tool.

So Braille should and will remain with us. It is an integral tool—as are recorded media and as the new technological innovations can become—in the increasingly successful struggle of the blind person to surge forward and take his or her proper place in the mainstream of society. The fruits of the labor of a blind Parisian teenager one hundred and fifty years ago must certainly be considered a landmark discovery helping to facilitate this march to independence.

FOOTNOTES

1. Donald Bell, "Reading by Touch," *The Braille Monitor*, June 1972, 295.
2. Ibid.
3. Robert B. Irwin, "The War of the Dots," from *As I Saw It*, by Robert B. Irwin (New York: American Foundation for the Blind, 1955), 47

4. Louis Harvey Goldish, *Braille in the United States: Its Production, Distribution, and Use* (New York: American Foundation for the Blind, 1967), 10.

5. Telephone conversation with Maxine Dorf, Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. January 24, 1975.

□

MY MOST FAMOUS STUDENT

BY
GERALDINE E. NICHOLSON

(Reprinted from the National Retired Teachers Association Journal Copyright 1974)

My most famous student certainly didn't seem destined for success when he appeared one morning in my third-term English class. Blind, he was escorted by another student and carried a Braille slate. Room 413 in the Charles Evans Hughes High School in New York City was my bailiwick. It was there that I became acquainted with this Puerto Rican boy who was to become a celebrity.

Why the student's father, a farmer, thought he could provide a better life for his family in New York City than in Puerto Rico was never explained. And how the father could expect a child born blind in the little village of Larez, to cope with city traffic in order to get to school was even more of a mystery.

However, I soon became convinced that the boy had a built-in radar system. I reached this conclusion the day he arrived clutching a battered instrument case almost as big as himself while his escort carried the

Braille slate.

"The Happy One" was his nickname and it was easy to understand why, once you heard him laugh. "No trouble, Teach, it's my guitar," he told me. "I brought it to school because I want to play in the orchestra. But Mr. Klinger thinks that because I can't see, I'll mess things up. But I won't, Teach. I feel music. Maybe if you could tell him that I could play the concertina when I was six and that when I was nine, I was playing my guitar in the Teatro Puerto Rico, then he would let me play. Tell him, will you Teach?"

"I will, if you'll stop calling me 'Teach,'" I promised him.

Again he laughed. "It's a deal. Let's shake," he said as he reached uncertainly for my hand.

"Poor kid," I thought. "What can the future hold for him?"

I am sure it never occurred to him that he could be the object of anyone's pity.

"I'm going to be a star," he would say. "I listen to the guys on radio, and that's what I want to be. Anyone who thinks I'm going to spend my life making mops and brooms or seats for chairs is crazy. I'm a musician and I'm going to be on top!"

The two other blind students in my class that term did quite a bit better than he did when we studied "Mutiny on the Bounty." But he assured me that he planned to read "Men Against the Sea" and "Pitcairn Island" if he could get them in Braille. "I'm on a sea kick, Teach, maybe I'll be a sailor!" Maybe, indeed.

A book on English and American ballads was more appealing to him. He enjoyed it so much that he kept his escort waiting after class to ask me a question.

Would you consider 'Moon River' a ballad? If you do, I'll bring in my guitar tomorrow and sing it to the class."

I did and he did. The tears ran down my cheeks as I listened to a quavery young voice singing to a river he could only imagine.

The third term was over in June and I didn't see him again until September. Then I met him in the elevator and I asked him how he was. "No complaints," he assured me heartily, and I had the grace to feel ashamed of myself for those I thought I had.

Actually I was surprised to find him in school at all because toward the end of the third term his attendance had fallen off alarmingly. Our combined efforts had convinced Mr. Klinger that he would be an asset to the orchestra so he was always present on practice and assembly days. But

he was somewhere else in between times. He had excuses, of course. Excuses that would break your heart, he hoped. According to these pitiable accounts, he was losing relatives at a startling rate. First his grandmother. "Such a kind lady!" Then an aunt. "Four little children and no mother!" And finally a cousin his own age. "Hit-and-run driver. Ugh!" He couldn't go to the funerals because he had to stay home with the little brothers (there were eventually seven) while his parents went. I didn't ask him what they used for money.

The truth of the matter was quite a different story. He was playing his guitar in Greenwich Village coffee houses until all hours and couldn't get up in the morning. I never knew this until years afterwards when I read what he told a *Newsweek* reporter.

"How did I get a job? I'd just walk into a coffee house with my guitar in a paper bag. They'd see a blind kid come in off the street and they'd say they didn't have time to listen to me. So I'd ask the boss if I could just tune up my guitar. He'd say O.K. Then I'd take it out and whale the devil out of it!"

He left school for good when he was seventeen and the next thing I heard he was playing in a Detroit night club. He was back in New York in '63, and glancing through Robert Shelton's music column in *The New York Times* one morning, I was astonished to learn that my embryonic third-term sailor was being described as a "ten fingered wizard who runs, rolls, picks, and reverberates his six strings in an incomparable fashion." Furthermore, Mr. Shelton recommended that: "Anyone who wants to witness the birth of a star should attend Jose Feliciano's performance at Gerde's

Folk City. Almost entirely self-taught, he learns lyrics by Braille and tapes his arrangements."

I have since read that he has mastered, besides six- and 12- string guitars, bass, banjo, and bongo drums, piano, organ, mandolin, harpsichord, and trumpet. How did he overlook the tuba!

In the same year, 1963, Jose married Hilda Perez, a girl he met on one of his coffee house stints. Now he had a dedicated companion to accompany him when he recorded the Newport Jazz Festival in '64, and started appearing on national TV shows. Al Hirt's was his first; this was followed by Bob Hope's and Bing Crosby's and many others.

His first solo album, "The Voice and Guitar of Jose Feliciano," appeared in the summer of '65. It is easy to imagine that he was puffed with pride as he listened to it. A reviewer for High Fidelity described it as "dazzling". "A Bagful of Soul" followed in '66 and Jose made his New York debut at Town Hall. A *New York Times* critic thought his performance lacked focus, but conceded that, "There is great charm in everything he does." Other critics thought his quavery tenor merely good.

Even so, his records soon soared to the top of the chart, and if Hilda was trying to keep up with him, she must often have been left breathless. In September '68 *Time* magazine reported, "He has drawn cheering, sell-out crowds to performances at the Greek Theatre in Los Angeles, and Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas. He has something for everyone, and he seems to be in demand everywhere for TV shows, movie soundtracks and personal appearances." The year before he had played the London Palladi-

um, and had flown to Argentina to make Spanish language records that were a hit across the continent.

However, it was Jose's rendition of the "Star-Spangled Banner" at the opening of the World Series in Detroit in August '68 that set the Nation back on its heels. Before a crowd of fifty-three thousand spectators and countless thousands of TV viewers, Jose did a blues-rock version of the national anthem. Some people liked it. A reporter for *Newsweek* wrote, "If not 'soul', Feliciano's version was soulful, substituting for the majestic harmonies and martial tempos a quiet no-man's land of slow motion meter in which no rockets glared and no bombs burst." Others didn't like it. And since I am not a rock enthusiast, I think I would have been among the shocked patriotic purists, if I had heard it.

When they have time to perch for a while, Jose and Hilda live in a handsome home in California amid dogs, chinchillas, tropical fish, and an aviary of four hundred birds. In April '69 Jose starred in his first TV special, "Feliciano, Very Special." The next month the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences awarded him two Grammies: one for the best male pop singer of '68, and the other for the best new artist of the year. His album "Souled" reached sales of one million within months of its issue. Jose's income was \$500,000 in 1968. Heaven knows what it is today!

Jose's mother is dead. But Papa Feliciano, who found new opportunities to farm in New York City, is back in Puerto Rico on the farm his talented son bought for him.

"The Happy One" is composing now as well as recording and has little time for recreation of any kind. When he has, he may

take a walk with his favorite dog, Trudy. Although it is more likely that this incredible fellow is riding his bike or water skiing! Astonishingly, he has made his blindness a subject for jest. He'll tell his audience that he drove his car to the concert, and then correct himself and add, "I don't drive too well." Nowadays he may say that

he's not at all worried about the energy crisis since he has always played in the dark.

Perhaps Jose's all time greatest hit is "Light My Fire," and it is most appropriate that it should be. For he had within him a fire that had to be lighted, and it has warmed the hearts of many. □

LETTER FROM A SHOPWORKER

January 6, 1975

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND
KENNETH JERNIGAN
Des Moines, Iowa

DEAR SIR: I heard your comments today over WCCO radio about helping in securing work for the blind, and helping to assure that they stay employed.

I have been legally blind for about five years. I went to work at the Lighthouse for the Blind in Duluth in January 1971, at which time I took a short training course and soon was sewing for them, which I continued into October of that year. Then I was advised that because of my excess production I would have to lay off or only work part time. I chose to lay off until January, 1972, at which time I went back to work, and having an average wage of \$1.98

per hour this was supposed to have been my minimum wage for the next six months. Instead, I was paid a minimum wage of \$1.29 per hour. I wrote to Mr. Earl B. Gustafson, a member of the board of directors about this but he said he could not become involved.

When I told Mr. Robert Pistel, executive director of the Lighthouse for the Blind, that I couldn't continue to work at \$1.29 when I was supposed to be getting \$1.98, he replied that if I didn't like it I should quit. To quote Mr. Pistel: "You need us but we don't need you." . . .

If you could be any help to me in this matter, I would greatly appreciate it. Thank you.

Yours truly,

□

STRIDES

Editor's Note.—The State of Iowa has published the Annual Report of its Commission for the Blind, entitled "Strides". The Report recounts the tremendous progress made by the Commission during the past year and speaks for itself.

And what does it all mean? What is the

Iowa Commission for the Blind all about? How do you put it all together?

Sometimes in the classroom learning Braille or typing; sometimes in the kitchen mixing and baking; sometimes in the shop using power tools; sometimes on the streets

learning confidence and independent mobility; sometimes water-skiing; sometimes talking by the fireplace; sometimes charcoaling hamburgers on the roof of the Commission Building; and sometimes picking corn in an Iowa field on a chilly day.—Sometimes hoping; sometimes doubting—but always working, always going to meet tomorrow. This is how the blind of Iowa are taking STRIDES.

New Strides

Both in technology and human terms the Commission made STRIDES during fiscal 1974. Visitors from throughout the nation and the world continued to come to see the Commission's program—the famous and the humble, the expert and the layman, the blind and the sighted. Among others, George Shearing came. He toured the Commission Building, discussed the Iowa philosophy of blindness, and gave an impromptu concert for students and staff.

There were advances in technology. The Triformation System represents a significant forward STRIDE. From a tape, multiple copies of Braille are electronically created. The tape can be indefinitely and compactly stored. Procured in fiscal 1974, the Triformation System offers immediate advantages and economy in producing Braille and holds even greater promise for the future as part of a possible system for the practical production of Braille at reasonable cost from a regular typewriter keyboard. STRIDES.

Strides in Space

In fiscal 1974 the Commission for the Blind acquainted the Governor and Legislature with an urgent problem. Space for library, classrooms, and rehabilitation facili-

ties was no longer adequate. Program efficiency and service delivery were in danger.

As they have always done, the Governor and the Legislature understood and responded. Necessary funds were appropriated, and remodeling began forthwith. The court in the south central part of the Commission Building will be filled in with new floors and an extra floor will be added above part of the present roof. Steel columns and reinforcement will allow new floor space within the existing structure. As the remodeling proceeded to full tempo, the regular services and work of the Commission for the Blind continue uninterrupted. Mutual flexibility and accommodation are required. All necessary to make STRIDES.

Strides in Jobs

STRIDES in rehabilitation means jobs and self-support. The Commission for the Blind provides the training needed for blind Iowans to enter employment, and the job placement contacts for newly acquired skills to be put to use.

Blind persons, like sighted persons, have varying abilities, capacities, and interests. Some achieve full self-support or support of a family. Others become competent housewives. Still others are capable of only partial self-support—each finding his own measure of success—the pace of his own STRIDES.

It is the function of the Commission to find the blind person and to provide encouragement, stimulation, training in the skills of blindness, vocational training, job counseling, contact with well-adjusted blind people, and job placement assistance. It is the responsibility of the blind person to

work toward his own rehabilitation, utilize every physical and spiritual resource available to him, and make his own STRIDES. This is being done ever more vigorously. It is the pattern and the philosophy—of the Commission for the Blind, and the blind themselves. It is the symbol and the substance of the STRIDES being made by the blind of Iowa.

During most of recorded history the blind have been denied the privilege of work, not being thought of as "unemployed," but "unemployable." Unfortunately this situation still exists in most parts of the world today, and in much of our own country. However, in Iowa we have made STRIDES. Although the blind of the State can still not find employment as readily as the sighted of comparable training, capacity, and experience—and although many are still distressingly "underemployed"—we are now at the time when any blind Iowan of working age who is willing to take training and who wishes to work can find productive and remunerative employment.

The money is important, but there is more to it than that. It is true that the blind, like others, have varying degrees of laziness and diligence; but when people have been told throughout the years that they are not capable of productive labor and have been forced to remain in idleness, they tend to greet the possibility of work with joy and pride, with positive zest. Most of the blind go to their jobs with gladness and thanksgiving. Perhaps it is best summed up in the words of the Prophet:

You work that you may keep pace with the earth and the soul of the earth.

For to be idle is to become a stranger unto the seasons, and to step out of life's procession,

that marches in majesty and proud submission towards the infinite.

When you work you are a flute through whose heart the whispering of the hours turns to music.

Which of you would be a reed, dumb and silent, when all else sings together in unison?

Always you have been told that work is a curse and labour a misfortune.

But I say to you that when you work you fulfill a part of earth's furthest dream, assigned to you when that dream was born.

And in keeping yourself with labour you are in truth loving life . . .

If you cannot work with love only with distaste, it is better that you should leave your work and sit at the gate of the temple and take alms of those who work with joy.

For if you bake bread with indifference, you bake a bitter bread that feeds but half man's hunger.

And if you grudge the crushing of the grapes, your grudge distills a poison in the wine.

* * *

Pallet assembly line production worker. Duties: placing material in assembly jig; nailing pallet together using pneumatic nailing machine; stacking completed units. Totally blind, he uses alternative techniques. Commission helped with counseling, job placement, and devising techniques in the

beginning on the job. Nothing else required.

* * *

He is a trucker's helper. Very limited sight. Commission provided special lenses. Many blind techniques must still be used. No problem with his work. Earns his own way.

* * *

Thirty years old. Diabetic. Taught high school English six years. Then—blindness. Commission helped: new techniques, counseling, encouragement, devices, and materials. Never left job. Teaches American Literature and drama. Advises staff of school annual, school plays, and newspaper. STRIDES.

* * *

Child care worker in juvenile section of Family Service Center.

* * *

Switchboard operator. Very limited eyesight. Commission helped with counseling, low vision aids, and job placement.

* * *

She teaches Spanish to sighted students in high school. Commission helped with training and materials, but she made her own STRIDES. Blind? Yes. Successful? Yes.

* * *

Blind and a sexton in a church? Why not?

* * *

He works as counselor and administrative

coordinator at an institution for emotionally disturbed adolescent children. He became blind as an adult as a result of diabetes. Attended Orientation Center at the Commission for the Blind. Went to college under Commission sponsorship. Has made STRIDES.

* * *

Thirty-five. Father of four. Appliance repair. Rehabilitation works. That says it all. STRIDES.

* * *

Medical transcriber in hospital. Uses Magnetic Tape Selectric Typewriter. Also uses Braille. Helps him with his work.

* * *

He works as an actuary clerk at an insurance company. Field of vision limited to seven degrees. Must use techniques of the blind if he is to function efficiently. Doing well on his job. STRIDES.

* * *

New company opens. Blind man second from left. Computer programmer. Helping new company make STRIDES.

Strides in Food Service

In 1969, the Legislature passed a law of great importance to the blind. It reads in part: "It is the policy of this State to provide maximum opportunities for training blind persons, helping them to become self-supporting and demonstrating their capabilities. A governmental agency which proposes to operate or continue a food service in a public office building shall first attempt in good faith to make an agreement for the Commission for the Blind to operate the food service without payment of rent. The governmental agency shall not offer or grant to any other party a contract or concession to operate such food service

unless the governmental agency determines in good faith that the Commission for the Blind is not willing to or cannot satisfactorily provide such food service."

When the Law was passed, it was hoped that it would provide not only immediate and direct employment for the blind but would also serve as a demonstration and a model for private industry. It was the belief that the citizens of Iowa visiting public buildings would see the blind making STRIDES and form a new image—that not only food service but other jobs, too, would result. The STRIDES have been made. The belief has been more than justified. In fiscal 1974 the earnings of blind food service operators reached an all time high.

During fiscal 1974, 141 blind Iowans were rehabilitated. They were a cross section of the State's population. They were employed in a wide range of occupations—teacher, small engine repair, church sexton, switchboard operator, computer programmer, assembly line worker, trucker's helper, farmer, et cetera. The Legislature and Executive Branch of government made possible the funds; the Commission for the Blind provided encouragement, stimulation, know-how, training, and assistance in finding employment; the general public offered opportunity and understanding; the blind did the rest. They worked hard, and they made STRIDES. Their story is one in which Iowans can take pride. To some extent, every citizen of the State has contributed to their success and shared in their STRIDES.

Strides in Training

It is respectable to be blind. This statement cannot be emphasized too strongly or made too often. A great percentage of the

population (blind as well as sighted) still do not believe it. The Commission's job? Make it a reality—otherwise, nothing else counts. Everything depends on it—self-confidence, belief, skills, techniques, the courage and the will to venture.

The Orientation staff at the Iowa Commission for the Blind not only develop new techniques and improve old ones; they also teach the hundreds of proved ones to new students. It would be impossible for a single individual to devise or think of all these on his own. By attending the Center, the student can quickly learn long cane travel, Braille, typing, the use of the abacus, wood and metal work, personal grooming and hair styling, cooking and shopping techniques, and other skills.

More important, the student must learn new attitudes about blindness. It may be on a field trip around a campfire; it may be water-skiing, woodcutting, or attending meetings or visiting programs for the blind in another state; or it may be sitting in the recreation room at the Center, talking with a fellow student or staff member. The *Where* doesn't matter. The critical thing is for the blind person to come to have belief in himself, to realize that he can be self-supporting, to learn that he can give as well as take, to be glad that he can have responsibilities, to know that life is good—to dream the impossible dream. To make STRIDES.

The mixture of skills and attitudes, of drudgery and dreams, of hard work and high hopes is the secret of the process. The rate of success is gratifyingly high, well over ninety percent. A few (a very few) go away defeated and bitter; blaming the world and the Commission for their blindness and failure; but the overwhelming majority

leave happy and optimistic, prepared to make STRIDES.

* * *

Kenneth Jernigan, Commission Director, charcoals hamburgers with students on the roof of the Commission Building. Not only good food, but also confidence comes from the grill. A blind person can light the fire, do the cooking, turn the meat, tell when it is done, take it up, and serve it—and all without assistance. The roof is a classroom, too; and the grill (in a manner of speaking) a textbook.

* * *

A key part of the training at the Commission for the Blind is independent travel. Unless you can go with ease and independence wherever you want to and whenever you want to, you are greatly limited in activity. Every student who completes the travel course does his "five-two." This refers to the complex five point two mile travel route through downtown Des Moines to test the skills which have presumably been acquired. Unless you can satisfactorily do your "five-two," it's back to the drawing board—and better luck next time.

* * *

She comes to the Commission Building to take training on the MTST (Magnetic Tape Selectric Typewriter). When she finishes, employment—STRIDES.

* * *

One student operates the radial arm saw. Blindfolds (called sleepshades) are used in class by those students with some remaining vision to overcome false dependency on

inadequate sight and to learn faster the alternative techniques of blindness. If the individual continues to try to use visual techniques (even though they are inadequate for him), he will probably not learn blind techniques at all. Also, if he has 10% or less remaining vision (the generally accepted definition of blindness) and learns (without blindfold) to operate a power saw or some other tool, he will likely think the reason he can do it is because he still has some sight. He wonders what will happen if he loses any or all of the remainder.

If, on the other hand, he blindfolds himself and learns that he can function with safety and efficiency in the manner of a totally blind person, it tends to remove the fear. When the techniques have been learned to reflex perfection, he can remove the sleepshades and use the combination of visual and blind techniques best suited to his own personal need. His willingness to undergo such training will depend almost entirely on whether he perceives it as "relevant" to his situation—which, in turn, will largely be determined by whether his instructors have the experience and maturity to see the "relevance." If the atmosphere is such that the student must be "required" to wear the sleepshades, use a cane, or employ any other technique, the value is probably already lost. At the heart of the matter are the subtle and often unrecognized attitudes about what blindness really is and what it really means—whether the blind person can truly compete on terms of equality, whether he can actually perform as well as others, and whether he can really be a full-fledged, first-class citizen with all the rights and privileges and also with all of the responsibilities. Here, in this crucial area, many professionals in the field fall short (often without even knowing it) and do much damage. They lack understanding and skill. Even

more, they lack belief that the blind can make STRIDES.

Braille is important. It is a key factor in the blind person's training for employment and independence. It is one of the STRIDES to equality and self-sufficiency.

Library: Accomplishment and Strides

Through the Iowa Commission for the Blind Library great literature and popular magazines, professional books and textbooks, farm journals and light novels are available to the blind—in reading rooms at the Commission, through the daily newspaper readings and other talking book services of radio station KDPS in Des Moines, or through the mail at home. Talking books (long play discs), open reel tapes, tape cassettes, large type, and Braille. A resource for Iowa's more than one hundred blind students in institutes of higher learning; for the hundreds of elderly blind; and for homemakers, elementary and high school students, professionals, farmers and factory workers.

Almost 40,000 books were processed by the Library each month during fiscal 1974—a constant stream of material going to the borrowers and returning from them. It requires an active staff actively working. To the blind person it means the book he wants at the time he wants it.

Helping the blind achieve vocational sufficiency and social equality, the Commission Library is a key factor and a prime resource in the hope, accomplishment, and STRIDES being made by the blind of the State.

In 1959 Iowa had no library for the blind. Today, unexcelled—modern reading

rooms, varied collections. In fiscal 1974 more than 215,000 books sent to blind people throughout the State. Total circulation since beginning of Library went over the two million mark during the year.

Chapter 601B, section five, Code of Iowa, 1973: "Bureau of information and library services. The Commission for the Blind may provide library services to blind and physically handicapped persons and shall act as a bureau of information and industrial aid for the blind . . ."

The Commission for the Blind provides library services to those who, because of visual impairment or some other physical condition, cannot read regular print. Sometimes a borrower will use more than one means of reading—Braille as well as talking book; talking book as well as tape; etc. In the following chart the same Library user is often represented in more than one category. Some, of course, use only one kind of reading matter. Each employs the pattern best calculated to achieve his own desire and make his own STRIDES.

The Library provides reading matter for the blind of Iowa, but it does other things, too: indoor travel routes through the stacks and work areas for beginning students; secretarial experience for the student planning to be a stenographer; and general work tolerance and experience for the individual who has never held a job. This student is shown as he learns the routine of regular work: be on time; keep the talk at a minimum while at work; don't overstay the lunch hour; and be polite and friendly to those coming for service. It's the way to make STRIDES.

COMMISSION LIBRARY BORROWERS,
June 30, 1974

Blind borrowers	
Talking book	5437
Braille	649
Open reel tape	215
Cassette tape	1078
Large print	573
Total	7952
Non-blind borrowers	
Total	7952
Recorded media	1340
Total, all categories	9292

Strides with Aids and Appliances

The Commission for the Blind provides a variety of devices to the blind for use in their daily living. White canes, Braille watches and clocks, specially marked games, cooking utensils and timers with Braille dials, and adapted needle threaders are examples of what is available. All of these special aids are provided to the blind person either at the Commission's cost, or in cases of vocational or other established need, at less than cost or no charge, within the limits of the Commission's resources.

Strides with the Deaf-Blind

The Commission for the Blind provides a variety of services to the deaf-blind of the State. Through a special appropriation made by the Legislature the Commission helps a number of deaf-blind children procure educational opportunities. The Commission's Braille Library is invaluable to the deaf-blind, and one of them earns money by proofreading Braille pages transcribed by volunteers. Through the Commission's home industries program the deaf-blind have earned money from work projects in their homes. Hearing aids (when indicated) and other assistance are provided to the ex-

tent of available resources and technology.

A woman communicates with a Commission staff member by a Tellatouch machine—a device with a typewriter keyboard which causes Braille dots to appear on a small disc so that they can be read as the message is typed. This permits "conversation" between the deaf-blind person and another individual.

Strides with Volunteers

Iowa Lions—whose motto is "We Serve"—carry on numerous projects for the blind at the local club level and collectively through the Iowa Lions Sight Conservation Foundation. They pay costs involved in producing Braille and taped material for the Commission Library, and they have a special project of making available through the Commission free Braille and recorded Bibles to the blind of the State. They distribute and purchase special aids for the blind, give information about service available to persons in their community who have lost their sight, and have many club programs for self-education regarding blindness. Their unwavering support of Iowa's program for the blind for so many years is testimony to a deep interest and a real understanding of the problems of the blind.

So that the Commission's Library can have the books to send, hundreds of volunteers give their time and resources to produce Braille, tapes, and large type when specific materials are needed. In fiscal 1974 volunteer tapists read over 73,000 printed pages; over 112,000 printed pages were Brailled; and more than 6,800 print pages were put into large type—in all, over 191,000 print pages were made available in a readable form to the blind in only one year by volunteers alone. This labor of

love by members of temple sisterhoods, church groups, service sororities, and individuals is most gratefully acknowledged by the Commission for the Blind.

The Hawkeye Chapter of the Telephone Pioneers of America, the Thomas Griffith Chapter of the Independent Telephone Pioneers, and the other telephone workers throughout Iowa distribute and repair the thousands of talking book machines (record players for the blind), teach new Library borrowers their use, assist blind persons in book selection, and have seminars for their own training in their technical assistance to the blind. Without this volunteer service, the Commission for the Blind would be less able to provide proper library and other services to the blind of the State.

The Home Industries program of the Iowa Commission for the Blind enables blind persons who, because of age or some additional handicap, are not able to work competitively outside their own homes, to engage in productive activity. The hemming of towels and tablecloths, the making of dishcloths, apron sets, and cloth dolls are but some of these activities.

The items manufactured in the Home Industry program are distributed through the Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs. Each club in the State has a "towel chairman" who coordinates local sales. In addition to this long-standing service project, the club-women of Iowa are increasingly active in public education about the capacities of the blind, in community development of opportunity for the blind, in taping books for the Library, and in overall assistance to the Commission for the Blind at the community level.

During fiscal 1975 the Commission for

the Blind should have available \$563,445 in State appropriated funds for its regular operating budget. In addition, approximately \$1,704,122 of Federal funds should be available to total \$2,267,567 to provide training and services of the type listed in this report.

To continue its programs at their present level the Commission is requesting from the Legislature for its regular operating budget \$623,000 in State appropriated funds for fiscal 1976 and \$649,800 in State appropriated funds for fiscal 1977.

If these funds are appropriated, at least \$1,796,045 in Federal funds should be available for fiscal 1976 and \$1,860,389 for fiscal 1977. These appropriations (if granted) should be sufficient to enable the blind to continue their STRIDES toward equality and a full life.

In addition to the sums already mentioned, the Commission for the Blind will be continuing the remodeling of its building in fiscal 1975. The 1974 Legislature appropriated \$140,000 for this purpose, and Federal funds in the amount of \$360,000 should be available to complete the contract.

The blind of Iowa look forward to the future with hope. This is so because the Governor, the Legislature, and the general public have generously supported the STRIDES the blind have made toward first-class citizenship and full participation in society. Additionally, it is so because the truth is being learned about blindness: that it need not be the tragedy it has always been considered—if there is training, if there is understanding, and if there is opportunity. Once discovered, the truth (the foundation of all meaningful faith) does not

dim with age. Oliver Wendell Holmes tersely said it as perhaps no one else could:

There's nothing that keeps its youth,

So far as I know, but a tree and a truth.
(This is a moral that runs at large;
Take it.—You're welcome.—No extra charge.)

□

AFFILIATES PLAN MEETINGS

NFB of Missouri will meet April 25-27, 1975 at the Tiger Motor Hotel, Columbia, Missouri. Room rates are \$12 for single and \$14 for double. The Columbia Chapter is hosting the convention.

NFB of California will meet May 2-4, 1975 at the Leamington Hotel in Oakland, California.

South Carolina Aurora Club of the Blind will meet in Charleston, at the Francis Marion Hotel, August 15-17, 1975.

The NFB of Kansas will meet September 12-14, 1975 at the Ramada Inn, Seventh & State Avenue in Kansas City. Room rates are \$10 for single and \$12 for double.

NFB of North Carolina will meet on September 20-21, 1975 at the Hilton Inn on West Market Street in Greensboro.

All of the above affiliates extend invitations to attend to all of their fellow Federationists who wish to see another group in action.

□

KANSAS CONVENTION

BY
RAYMOND GRABER

The annual convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Kansas was held in Wichita at the Diamond Motor Inn on September 13, 14, and 15. The South Central Chapter as host contributed much toward making the event a success.

Committee meetings were held on Friday evening, with Bill Sailler as chairman of resolutions. The nominating committee was chaired by Jack Kelly, filling in for Ken Tiede who was unable to attend due to illness. The hospitality room was enjoyed by all.

Opening the convention on Saturday morning at nine o'clock was President Richard Edlund. We were graciously welcomed

to Wichita by Mayor Porter, who brought us up to date on the problems between the Kansas Foundation for the Blind and Urban Renewal. Response was given by Raymond Gruber. The minutes and other committee reports were heard. President Edlund brought us up-to-date on the major events of the year, which included the organization of a bargaining unit at Kansas Industries for the Blind in Kansas City, Kansas and State legislation which amended the Civil Rights Act to include the physically handicapped. Mrs. Ruth Dawson spoke concerning Supplemental Security Income.

Congressman Bill Roy, the only Kansas legislator who has introduced the Disability for the Blind Bill this year, encouraged us

to contact other legislators concerning this matter. Dr. Roy is one of the few persons who holds both a medical and a law degree. Mr. Collins, president of the Kansas Foundation as well as chairman of the Sight Conservation Committee of the Lions Club, spoke to us.

Sherry Hokanson, Director of the Blind and Physically Handicapped Division of the State Library in Topeka, and Betty Spriggs of the Wichita Library, brought us up-to-date on library services. Mr. Hall of Wichita State University, informed us of a new audio-reader service soon to be implemented in Wichita.

The afternoon session opened with the singing of NFB songs led by Linda Carpenter. As NFB representative, James Omvig brought greetings from Dr. Jernigan and a report of recent happenings on the national level.

Jana Sims reported on the International Federation's Convention in Berlin, Germany. Dr. Lewis, Superintendent of the Kansas State School for the Visually Handicapped, spoke of the uphill fight for the survival of the school. He also talked of a new vocational program.

A panel of industrial workers told us of their employment. It included Jim Stewart, mechanic for GSA in Kansas City, Missouri; Howard Kirch, drill press operator for Ress-ton Manufacturing Company, Hesston, Kansas; and Raymond Gruber, pump assembler for Fairbanks-Morse, Kansas City, Kansas.

A panel of persons involved in professions included Judy Shepherd of Wichita, medical transcriber, and Susan Lane, computer programmer of Kansas City, Missouri.

An invocation given by Reverend van der Bloemen of the Immanuel Lutheran Church, Wichita, opened the banquet program. Master of ceremonies was State Representative Walter W. Gruber of Pretty Prairie, Kansas, who did a fine job. U.S. Senator Bob Dole made an appearance and spoke a few words. Our banquet speaker was James Omvig. We were also honored with a few words from Dr. Andrew Adams. State Representative Bill Morris was presented the Jacobus tenBroek Award by President Edlund for his outstanding contribution to the blind of the State of Kansas for introducing the amendment to the Civil Rights law to include the physically handicapped. Recognized as guests were State Senator Billy McCray and State Representative "Rip" Reeves, both of Wichita.

The Sunday morning session began with an invocation by Jim Stewart, second vice president. An interesting talk was given by Linda Ray, Visual Consultant in the Shawnee Mission School District.

We heard reports from the presidents of the four chapters—Esther Gunther, Wichita, for the South Central Chapter; Nathan Shelby for the KUWB, Kansas City, Kansas; Sonia Carr for the Kaw Valley Chapter, Western Wyandotte County. A report by Ken Tiede for the Johnson County Chapter was read by Linda Ray. The treasurers report was given by Walter Long.

The following resolutions were adopted by the convention: (1) asking the Legislature to make a thorough in-depth study of the Division of Services for the Blind to determine if the information and services are available to all blind persons throughout the State; and (2) reaffirming the NFB's stand on NAC.

An election was held and our officers are: Richard Edlund, president; Raymond Graber, first vice president; Jim Stewart, second vice president; Martha Kelly, secretary; and Walter Long, treasurer. Board members are Sonia Carr, Jackie Peters, and

Becky Clark.

The convention closed after general discussion and pleasure when it was announced that 105 persons had attended the banquet. □

ARKANSAS CONVENTION

BY
BRUCE HIGGS

The blind came to exercise their right to speak for themselves. They came one hundred and fifty strong to discuss ways of improving the quality of life for blind Arkansan. They came throughout the weekend of November 22-24 to make the 1974 annual convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas the largest meeting of the blind ever held in this State.

The Little Rock Chapter hosted a hospitality room on Friday evening. The resolutions committee, chaired by State board member Jim Hudson, met on Friday evening, and the room was filled with interested Federationists. In all, twelve resolutions were acted upon. They ranged from supporting the renomination of Dr. Adams, the right of sheltered shop employees to a minimum wage, continued opposition by the blind of the State to NAC, to supporting the adoption of a Human Rights Commission act by the State Legislature.

Saturday's activities began with a board breakfast which was well attended. At 9:30 a.m., President Ralph Sanders called the convention to order. The welcome was given by Nathaniel Hill, Director of the City of Little Rock's Department of Human Resources. Hill stressed the right of the blind to first-class citizenship. His remarks

were well received and he presented to our honored guest from our National Office, James Gashel, an honorary citizenship certificate and a key to the city.

A panel discussion on employment opportunities for the blind involved members of the business community and a representative from the Division of Service for the Blind. Closing out the morning session was the report of the Chief of our Washington Office, James Gashel, who gave a thorough rundown on Federation activities around the country and in Congress during 1974.

There were two special luncheons during the noon hour, which gave vending stand managers and teachers an opportunity for thorough discussions within their respective areas.

A panel on employment problems opened the afternoon session. It included Bean Hudson, statistician with the State Office on Aging, who credits the Federation for invaluable assistance in getting her job; Wilma Saterfield, the first blind Arkansan to be employed by the Arkansas Division of Southwestern Bell Telephone Company and whose job was obtained through efforts of the Federation; Cindy Holland, who had to return to graduate school when she learned

that employment opportunities for blind college graduates in the State were severely limited; and Dick Seifert, Director of Client Assistance Project for the Division of Services for the Blind. The panel was chaired by Jim Hudson.

The convention then heard a presentation on a volunteer taping program being sponsored by the NFBA to assist in getting books into the hands of blind readers.

Last on the afternoon agenda was a panel discussion entitled: "NAC, Perspective 1974." It was expected to provide excitement, and it met all expectations. Because the schedule was running behind time, President Sanders warned Bean Hudson, panel moderator, that there would be only one hour and five minutes available. Panelists included Louis Rives, Director of Research, Arkansas Enterprises for the Blind and a member of NAC's board who had served on the ad-hoc committee which negotiated terms of agreement with the NFB; Harry Vines, Deputy Commissioner of the Division of Service for the Blind, Max Wooley, Superintendent of the Arkansas School for the Blind and a former NAC Board member; and James Gashel.

The panelists presented their view on the value of NAC to the blind, not a popular view to express before this crowded audience. At one point in his presentation, Mr. Vines said that he was not "going to get into all of this because you won't understand it." It was obvious that the audience understood a great deal about NAC and about the perspectives of the panelists.

Mr. Wooley began his presentation by announcing the score of the University of Arkansas football game. As time went by, Federationists began murmuring that the

other panelists were attempting to keep Mr. Gashel from having his turn. But a turn he took, and gave a thorough-going analysis of NAC's failures to establish accountability to the blind. There was little time for questions, but tensions were high and the halls were filled with discussions about the panel for the rest of the evening.

By seven o'clock when the banquet began, close to one hundred Federationists and guests were on hand. Mr. Gashel topped off an exciting day with a fine review of philosophies about blindness. With an audience of enthusiastic Federationists, he had little trouble convincing them about which view was right.

President Sanders presented several awards. The membership award went to Mrs. Dorothy Banks of Little Rock and the fundraising award to Billy Joe Rederrin of Magnolia. Mrs. Nancy Potter accepted an award for Bell Telephone, and the trophy for outstanding chapter participation went to the Little Rock chapter. While Little Rock rejoiced in the award, representatives of the Bonanza Land chapter and the Hot Springs and Pine Bluff chapters promised to take it away in 1975. Searcy Ewell, newly elected Little Rock chapter president, received a strong vote of appreciation from the audience for his work as convention chairman.

A special award for outstanding dedication to the National Federation of the Blind went to Mrs. Alpha Ennis who was a charter member in Arkansas and who has served in every capacity in the organization during the past twenty years. She announced her retirement from the board but pledged her continued total dedication and efforts on behalf of the Federation.

A surprising number of Federationists were present when the president gaveled the Sunday morning session to order. Each local chapter made its report. Growth had been the key in 1974 and continued growth was the pledge for 1975.

There were elections for two new board positions. Replacing Alpha Ennis is Jim Little of Fort Smith, and replacing Dianne Durham of Pine Bluff, who had asked not to be re-elected because of poor health, is

James Adams of Pine Bluff. Jim Hudson was elected delegate to the 1975 National Convention and Cindy Holland was elected alternate delegate.

The convention closed at noon as scheduled and enthusiastic Federationists headed for homes throughout the State. It was truly a landmark meeting in every respect. Arkansas can never be the same with the blind committed to progress through their own organization. □

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

BY

HAZEL STALEY

Editor's Note: Hazel Staley is the energetic leader of the NFB of North Carolina, a member of the NFB Executive Committee, and the busy wife of Robert Staley, who, like all spouses of active Federationists, should be thanked for his forbearance.

POUND CAKE

3 cups sugar	2 teaspoons vanilla flavoring
2 sticks margarine or butter	3 cups flour
½ cup shortening	½ teaspoon baking powder
5 eggs	1 cup milk
1 tablespoon lemon flavoring	

(All ingredients should be at room temperature.)

Method:

Cream sugar, margarine, and shortening until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. (This is very important.) Add flavorings and blend. Combine flour and baking powder. Add alternately with milk to cream mixture. Pour into a ten-inch tube pan lined with wax paper. Bake at 350 degrees for one hour. Reduce heat to 300 degrees and continue baking for 20 minutes. Do not open oven during first hour.

For chocolate pound cake: omit lemon flavoring and use 1 tablespoon of vanilla, ½ cup cocoa, and pinch of salt.

Chocolate Icing:

3 egg yolks
½ cup sugar
¾ cup milk
1 and ½ tablespoons of butter
2 teaspoons vanilla
6 squares chocolate
pinch of salt

Method:

Melt chocolate. Beat egg yolks until very thick. Add sugar, milk, and butter. Combine with chocolate and cook in heavy saucepan over low heat, stirring constantly. Bring to boil and boil for one minute.

Remove from heat. Stir in salt and vanilla. Beat to spreading consistency. Spread on top and sides of cake.

MONITOR MINIATURES

After nearly thirty years of service as a judge, Donald H. Wilkinson, who is totally blind, has retired after the end of his term of office as Judge of the Superior Court of the State of California, in and for the County of Humboldt. When Judge Wilkinson was first elected a judge, there was introduced in the Legislature a bill which would have barred any blind person from serving on the bench. The NFB of California vigorously and successfully opposed the bill. It is a bit ironic, however, that a blind man can serve as a judge in the State courts of California yet blind persons are not permitted to serve as jurors.

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Plans are proceeding for a National Conference on Aging and Blindness co-sponsored by the American Foundation for the Blind and the Administration on Aging. The target date for the Conference is the Spring of 1975. The theme of the conference will be: "Meeting the Challenges of the Elderly with Sight Difficulties - Action '76."

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The NFB of Iowa *Bulletin* reports that in October Governor Robert Ray signed the White Cane Proclamation. Copies of the Proclamation were sent to all daily newspapers throughout the State and recordings of a statement concerning the Proclamation by the Governor were sent to all radio stations. This material was used by many newspapers and radio stations throughout Iowa. In addition, over a dozen newspapers carried proclamations signed by the mayors of the cities proclaiming White Cane Day.

Charles L. Allen of the Kentucky Federation of the Blind reports that Federationists came from all over the Commonwealth of Kentucky to honor its retiring president, Colonel Robert L. Whitehead at a special Thanksgiving Social given in November in Louisville. It was an appropriate time of the year to give thanks for a man who has dedicated his life to advancing the cause of the blind. President Kenneth Jernigan of the NFB was unable to attend, but his words expressed the feeling of all who were: "I am, indeed, sorry that I cannot be with you at the dinner to honor Bob Whitehead. I know of no individual who more richly deserves tribute than Bob, and I would hasten to include Lillian; for they have been a team, bringing betterment to the lives of the blind of Kentucky, and the Nation. For many years the Whiteheads have been among my closest and dearest personal friends. I join with you in giving recognition to the service they have performed—and will still perform in the years ahead. There are no finer people anywhere in the Federation—which is another way of saying there are no finer people anywhere in the world."

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"*Listen*," published by the Carroll Rehabilitation Center for the Visually Impaired, is marking its silver anniversary. This may be its final issue, because of the lack of sufficient funding. However, we hope that our salute is a hail, not a farewell, to this fine publication.

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A "ratable reduction" policy of the In-

diana State Board of Public Welfare for determining the amount of assistance to be granted welfare recipients was ruled invalid by a Circuit Judge in Greenfield, Indiana. The judge ruled that the State Legislature did not have the power to delegate authority to the State Welfare Board to institute the plan. The board had established a reduction in grants of as much as 35 percent and affected between 8,500 and 10,000 welfare recipients state wide.

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The *Observer*, publication of the Montana Association of the Blind, reports that Budd Gould was elected to the Montana House of Representatives from Missoula and he is now trying to locate a full-time assistant. He is the first blind member of the Legislature since George Anderson of Cascade County left office in 1958 after serving four terms.

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The *Newsletter* of the Virginia Commission for the Visually Handicapped reports that there are now 70 percent more radios than people in the United States. In 1972 there were 350 million working order radio sets. There are 91,700 radio sets in automobiles. The car radio is used 62 percent of driving time. Eighty-two percent of workers get to the job by car. In 1971, sales of transistor radios totaled 32,730,000. Seventy-five percent of teenagers, 53 percent of adult women, and 55 percent of adult men own transistor radios for their personal use. Nine out of ten adults feel it is important to keep up with the news as soon as it happens. Eight out of ten adults feel radio's role in providing information about their local area is very important.

Speculation has frequently been made as to just how many blind persons might benefit from the NFB's Disability Insurance for the Blind bill when it becomes law and thus eliminate the amount of earnings as a test of eligibility. According to the Bureau of Disability Insurance, there are 85,000 persons receiving disability insurance because of blindness as the primary disabling condition. There would be an unknown number of these who would engage in substantial gainful employment if they would not lose their eligibility because of earnings. The best estimate we have as to the number of blind persons employed in sheltered workshops is 6,000 and many of these would be eligible for disability insurance. Finally, the Internal Revenue Service indicates that for calendar year 1971 there were 136,000 income tax returns claiming an extra exemption because of blindness. Put these all together and it is a very large figure. Also, of course, there are some 3,600 blind vending stand operators, most of whom would be eligible for disability insurance except for their earnings.

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Among those included in the 1974-75 edition of "Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges" was Kevin Shields, who is a member of the NFB of Denver and also a member of the NFB Student Division. This honor is conferred annually upon outstanding student leaders from approximately 1,100 colleges and universities in the United States.

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In cooperation with the American Foundation for the Blind, the European Regis-

ter of Research on Visual Impairment is being extended to cover the world research community. This register will not include purely medical research, but it will include research on the causes of blindness, work with extremely low vision patients, sight-restoration and management, and referral of patients who are undergoing deterioration of visual capacity. Those doing research related to visual impairment are requested to send their names, postal addresses, names of co-workers, and a profile of the nature of their current research projects to: Dr. J. H. Gill, Department of Engineering, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL, England.

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A large group of Old Time Fiddlers gathered recently under the sponsorship of the NFB of Idaho. The Finance Chairman had given out a large number of tickets for sale a month earlier. The result—a large crowd of people assembled to listen, some to sing, and some to dance. This turned out to be a fun way to raise funds.

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The wage base on which Social Security taxes are paid increased on January 1, 1975 from \$13,200 to \$14,100. The maximum amount Social Security recipients can earn without any deduction also increased from \$200 to \$210 a month. There will be an automatic cost-of-living increase for some 30 million Social Security beneficiaries, which will be reflected in the July, 1975 checks.

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The Jackson City chapter of Jackson, Mississippi, elected new officers at their De-

cember 22, 1974, meeting. They are as follows: president, Melba Barlow, first vice president, Dennis Nealy; second vice president, Tommy Johnson; secretary, James Boyd; treasurer, Lorraine Bates; and board members, John Holley and Bill Allison.

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Light Brigade, Inc., of Lyndhurst, New Jersey, had its meeting November 15th at which they elected the following officers for 1975: president, Marty Friedman; vice president, Jim Stanlick; secretary, Eleanor Falkenstein; treasurer, Jeanne Starkey; sergeant at arms, Tom Curnkey; trustee for three years, Richard Pichard.

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The Dallas, Texas, chapter of the State Federation of the Blind held its election January 4th, and its new president is Mr. Gene Pride.

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On January 19th, the Queen City League of the Blind of Ohio, Inc., held its annual election at the home of Jack and Eba Masten in Cincinnati. Results were as follows: president, Paul Dressell; vice president, Barbara Frazier; secretary, Bernadette Dressell; treasurer, Jeanette Galbreath; financial secretary, Lovey Dressell; three year trustee, Don Pruitt; 2nd year trustee, Esther Risch; 3rd year trustee, Tom Allen. Tom Allen will serve as member of the executive board at the NFB of Ohio convention, and Paul Dressell will serve as delegate to the State convention.

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On January 21, the Columbia chapter,

NFB of Missouri, elected Tom Stevens president.

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A list of the newly elected officers of the NFB of Lorain County, Ohio, reads as follows: president, Barbara Pierce; vice president, George Gilbert; secretary, Jon Sweeney; treasurer, Kathryn MacLiod.

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The National Federation of the Blind of Vigo County, Indiana, had a meeting on October 5, 1974, and elected new officers as follows: president, Mary Jeanne Lee; vice president, Maetta Williams; recording

secretary, Jackie Stanley; treasurer, Bill Lee; and associate secretary, Debbie Lewis.

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Harvey Webb writes that the NFB of Louisiana will hold its State convention in New Orleans on April 12 and 13. He adds that their Baton Rouge chapter now has a new president—Ethel Anderson.

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Alice Fornia, president of the San Francisco chapter of the NFBC, reports that Jim Cawood is the new executive director of the San Francisco Lighthouse for the Blind. □

